

Injury Prevention

Indian Health Service

South Dakota Child Deaths Highest in Nation

Volume 1, Issue 1

Fall 2007

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a philanthropic organization whose purpose is to foster public policies, human-service reforms and community supports so that society can better meet the needs of children and families. One of their initiatives is the “Kids Count”. “Kid Count” provides National and State-by-State information and statistical trends on the conditions of America’s children and families.

The 2007 “Kids Count” data finds that South Dakota ranks highest in child death rates. The majority of these deaths are attributed to motor vehicle crashes.

The CDC *WISQARS* report for South Dakota for the period 2000-2004 shows that injury death rates for all races, ages 0-14, was 28/100,000, while the rate for American Indians in the

0-14 age group was 69/100,000.

Injury deaths are preventable, especially those resulting from motor vehicle crashes. The disparities between Indian children and non-Indian children in South Dakota are glaring and should not be this great.

Narrowing the injury disparities will occur by changing/ implementing public policies, environmental change and awareness.

This newsletter is a new initiative by the Area Injury Prevention Program with the intention of raising awareness and response to injuries in Indian Country. We will focus on best practices and ongoing successes as well as profiling the various injuries that cause disabilities and mortalities in Indian Country.



Public policy and environmental change is not just the responsibility of the Indian Health Service, but also of the community and legislative bodies in Indian Country. Only when all entities are aware of and working together will we see these disparities decrease.

- Injuries are the leading cause of death if American Indians from 1-44 years of age
- Injury rates for American Indians are 2-3 times higher than the US All Races Rate
- American Indians comprise 4.9% of ND population and accounted for 26% of motor vehicle fatalities in 2003
- American Indians comprise 8.3% of SD population and accounted for 28% of motor vehicle fatalities in 2003

Life is sacred. Protect it

SUCCESS STORIES: Sisseton Makes a Difference

Submitted By Ray Kenmotsu, Sanitarian, Sisseton Service Unit

Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Grants were developed to build the capacity of AI/AN communities to build IP infrastructure by developing, implementing, and evaluating IP programs. TIPCAP provides funding for 5-year funding cycles and is in its third funding cycle. The Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation is in its second year of a full funding cycle. The SWO IP Program

has established Objectives implementing known strategies for preventing Motor Vehicle Crash (MVC)-related fatalities and injuries in young adults (14-29 years).

One critical Objective relates to the importance of both education and enforcement. It is to “**Assist Law Enforcement in promoting high visibility law enforcement activities focusing on the three critical traffic safety factors-alcohol, speed, and use of occupant restraints (seat belts and**

Child safety seats)”. The activities are part of an on-going effort to raise awareness of the importance of seat belt use and, ultimately, to save lives.

(see more on page 2)



Inside this issue:

<i>Enforcement Activities</i>	2
<i>Risk Watch</i>	2
<i>Drowning Prevention</i>	2
<i>Crash Reporting</i>	3
<i>Best Practices</i>	4
<i>Staff Profile</i>	5
<i>BIA Law Enforcement</i>	5
<i>Area Injury Prevention</i>	5
<i>Indian Highway Safety</i>	6
<i>2008 Fellowship</i>	6
<i>General News</i>	6

Tribal Police Enforce Seatbelt Law all Wacipi Weekend

Submitted by Shannon White, SWO Injury Prevention Coordinator

Sisseton-Wahpeton Law Enforcement take the safety of the people seriously. During this last Wacipi weekend, they checked all cars coming through the gate to make sure all occupants were wearing their seatbelts. They also checked for drugs, alcohol and fireworks. Most folks were buckled up and only a small percentage had to be reminded to put their seatbelts on.

This was an important step in our tribe's fight against losing our people to motor vehicle

crashes. Seatbelts can prevent fatalities and serious injuries over 40% of the time. Only a few people coming through the gate complained, most understood that the police weren't unnecessarily holding up the lines. Hopefully, the visitors that came for the Wacipi will see that we are a tribe that cares about its members.

Remember, it is so important to wear your seatbelt each and every time you get into your vehicle. It only takes two seconds, and you could be saving your own life!

Buckle Up, SWO!



Captain Gary Gaikowski

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITIES YOUTH

Risk Watch is a comprehensive Injury Prevention curriculum available for use in schools. It was developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) with co-funding from the Home Safety Council. Risk Watch gives children and their families the skills and knowledge they need to create safer homes and communities.

Risk Watch is a school based curriculum that links teachers with community safety experts and parents. The curriculum is divided into five age appropriate teaching modules for

grades pre-kindergarten through 8. The curriculum covers the eight areas kids 14 and under are at highest for intentional injury:

- Motor Vehicle Safety
- Fire and burn prevention
- Choking, suffocation and strangulation prevention
- Poison Prevention
- Fall Prevention
- Firearm Injury Prevention
- Bike and Pedestrian Safety
- Water Safety

"If a disease were killing our children in the proportion that injuries are, people would be outraged and demand that this killer be stopped" C. Everett Koop, MD, Former Surgeon General

Verlee White Calf-Saylor of Ft. Berthold has been successful in getting this initiative introduced in 5 school districts and 6 Head Starts on the Ft. Berthold Reservation.

KIDS DON'T FLOAT

Submitted by Marcel Felicia, Sanitarian, Ft. Thompson Service Unit

The Kids Don't Float Program initially started in Alaska when drowning was identified through injury data as a major problem in villages.

So, during the summer of 2001 the program was implemented at the swimming beach by the Fallen Warrior softball field in Fort Thompson, SD.

The Indian Health Service, Office of Environmental Health and the Corps of Engineers in Fort Thompson, SD thought it would be a

good idea to make the swimming beach safer for swimmers by implementing a Kids Don't Float Program and partnered in the effort to make the swimming area safer.

The Corps of Engineers designed 6 signs located at the beach with different safety messages on them. At the bottom of each sign is a case with seven life jackets ranging in sizes of small, medium and large. The Indian Health Service was able to help with the program by providing life jackets through its injury prevention program. The life jackets are available for use at the beach if someone does not swim well or to assist anyone in helping save a drowning victim. There have been no drowning since the implementation of the program.



IMPROVING MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH REPORTING ON NINE SOUTH DAKOTA RESERVATIONS

Between 2001-2005 Native Americans in South Dakota were killed in motor vehicle crashes at a rate 3 times higher than non-Indians. Crash reports with data regarding these crashes aren't always available and as a result data identifying contributing causes to these crashes are also not available. As such opportunities to identify roadway hazards, enforcement needs and educational needs are lost.

With these lost opportunities in mind, the Indian Health Service and the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe proposed a study aimed at improving motor vehicle crash reporting on nine South Dakota Indian Reservations. This study was sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Transportation, the nine reservations, the SD Department of Public Safety and relevant federal agencies.

The focus of the study was to collect actual

crash information from each of the nine tribes for 2005. A total of 737 crashes were found that had not been reported to the state. This was 64 percent of the total.

As mentioned, lost opportunities include the ability to identify roadway hazards, enforcement needs and educational opportunities. However, the lack of available crash reports also affects the drivers in terms of insurance claims. It also hinders the effectiveness of Tribes to successfully compete for grants. So...the implications of this study are great.

Recommendations from this study include:

- That the Dept of Public Safety and Office of Attorney General collaborate to establish & market a Crash Reporting Course that will certify officers in crash reporting, investigation and use TraCS
- That the SD Dept of Transportation nego-

tiate with SD Dept of Public Safety and Tribal Councils to establish and maintain individual MOA's that define tribal crash reporting commitments and allowable uses and protection that will apply to crash report data

- The SD Dept. of Transportation should inform county and municipal agencies of MOA's that are established through their respective local government associations and law enforcement associations
- The Dept of Public Safety Office of Highway Safety should annually market the Section 408 Safety Data Improvement Program and other applicable NHSTA programs to the nine Tribes in SD to identify and support productive and sustainable improvements in crash reporting on Tribal lands.

(continued on page 5)

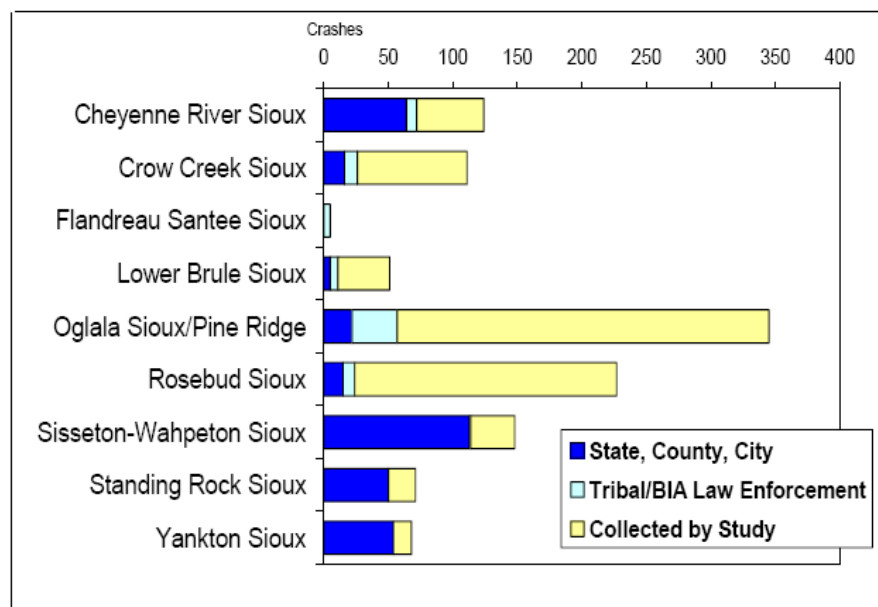


Figure 1: Motor Vehicle Crashes for 2005, Before and After Study, Within Reservation Boundaries as Defined by 2000 Census
Source: South Dakota Accident Reporting System (SDARS) data, summarized geographically by ICF, and Tribal/BIA Law Enforcement data collected during the study.

For more information on the project you may contact Dave Huft at (605) 773-3358 or, dave.huft@state.sd.us

A complete final report and executive summary are available at:

http://state.sd.us/Application/HR19ResearchProjects/oneprojects_search.asp?projectnbr=SD2005-14

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES — Motor Vehicle Crashes

Effective strategies are those that have been researched, tested, and proven. Since this newsletter has focused on motor vehicle crashes, the effective strategy portion for this issue will be on reducing motor vehicle crashes.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the *Journal for Preventive Medicine* have identified and recommended three areas that will reduce motor vehicle crashes and the injury and death that accompany them. These areas are:

- **Increasing the proper use of child safety seats**

- **Increasing the use of safety belts, and,**
- **Reducing alcohol impaired driving**

The main theme within each of these 3 strategies is laws and enforcement. This is something that Indian Country as a whole is very lax in. If there is a law it is not routinely enforced. However, enforcement is the key. Community members need to know that the use of child safety seats, and safety belts will be enforced and consequences delivered. We, in Indian Country, also, should not tolerate alcohol impaired driving. The majority of fatalities stemming from motor vehicle crashes are alcohol related.

We need to know if we have laws relating to these strategies and if not advocate for them. If there are laws we need to demand they are being enforced. If there

are laws, and they are being enforced, **thank your police department. They are saving you and your loved ones lives!**



Child Safety Seats

When correctly installed and used, child safety seats reduce the risk of death by 70% for infants and 47%-54% for toddlers and reduce the need for hospitalization by 59% for children 4 years of age and younger. (Hey, those CHS funds can be used for something else!)

While laws regarding the size of the child may vary, the laws regarding child safety seats should be primary. Primary means that an officer can stop a vehicle solely upon noticing that a child is not in a safety seat. This is opposed to a secondary law in which they would

have to have another reason to stop and then just notice that the child is not in the seat.

Love your child enough to prevent their disability or death. Make sure they are properly placed in a child safety seat.



Reducing Alcohol Impaired Driving

Alcohol related motor vehicle crashes continue to be a major public health problem in Indian Country. This problem is evident in the number of deaths attributed to it. The majority of these deaths in young males between the ages of 19-44 years of age, the future of our communities. It is also evident in the increasing number of young people who are paraplegic and quadriplegic. Motor vehicle crash injuries and death are also a huge drain on already limited Contract Health funds. Funds that could be used on preventive illnesses and

diseases.

Reducing alcohol impaired driving can be achieved in a number of ways. Some of those ways are:

- Sobriety checkpoints
- .08 BAC levels (although if you are a dry reservation it should be at 0)
- Lower BAC levels for young or inexperienced drivers

Of course, your courts have to be willing to cooperate. Police can only enforce, the next step is up to the courts.

So do you know what your laws are? Do you have any?

Check with your local Sanitarian, Judicial Committee, Prosecutor. If there are none start working on some. This could save your life or that of a loved one.

STAFF PROFILE—JENNIFER FRANKS PR SERVICE UNIT

Mrs. Jennifer Franks is a hard working Field Sanitarian for the Pine Ridge Service Unit. She has been selected twice for the Aberdeen Area OEH&E Sanitarian of the Year. Jennifer likes every aspect of her job but enjoys Injury Prevention the most. She has been very instrumental in getting the Injury Prevention Surveillance organized and going.

She is also a very dedicated wife and supportive mother of three, Kenneth Jr., Jacob and Maya. Jennifer tries to attend all of the sporting events her boys are involved with. She

enjoys playing softball, going on bike rides and walking in the evenings with her family.

Keep up the good work Jenny!



FAREWELL

The Area Injury Prevention staff would like to bid farewell to Larry Dauphinais, Minot District Sanitarian. Larry has worked for I.H.S. for years and has been the District Sanitarian for 22 years. Larry has been very instrumental in networking to further the cause of Injury Prevention and will be missed, but we wish him the best of luck in his retirement.

Ray Kenmotsu, Sisseton Sanitarian will also be leaving us for Taos, NM where he will be the Service Unit Sanitarian. We have enjoyed working with Ray and wish him luck.

BIA LAW ENFORCEMENT

BIA Law Enforcement Service throughout the Area has been very supportive of Injury Prevention efforts. They are putting more focus on highway drug interdictions and also saturation patrols, with highway safety being one of their priorities. Traffic violations and seatbelt checks are at the forefront.

The ability to move and share resources is one of the ways that they can accomplish more and be able to focus more on highway safety. Elmer Four Dance, District 1 Commander says that they have been moving officers to where they are needed at times when communities need more officers such as during special events.



MO- TOR VE- HICLE CRASH REPORTING

(continued from page 3)

- SD Dept of Public Safety's Office of Highway Safety should work with each Tribe to identify a feasible method for

acquiring electronic crash records and transferring them into the SD Accident Reporting System. Each Tribe should be worked with on a case-by-case basis to identify concerns and work toward resolution of such.

- Annual consultation meetings to advise Tribal governments in SD of the existence and mechanics of its Roadway Safety Improvement Program and of the Road Safety Audit Program, and encourage the submission of grant applications for improvement. Tribes should be made aware of the State's available resources.

AREA INJURY PREVENTION

Injury Prevention seeks to identify and prevent injuries. In Indian Country this is no small task since injuries are the leading cause of death for Indian people, with motor vehicle crashes leading the way. Injuries in Indian Country take Indian people at the prime of their life, drain Contract Health Service budgets and steal the workforce from an already dwindling economy. The sad thing about this is that injuries are preventable. With proper actions they do not have to kill or disable our people. Without preventable injuries limited

Contract Health budgets can spent on identifying and treating illness and disease to a greater capacity, and we can assure that there are healthy individuals ready contribute to the workforce of our communities.

With these thoughts in mind this newsletter will strive to keep the reader updated on the scope of the injury problem in Indian Country and arm the community with tools that they may take and use to contribute to injury prevention. This newsletter is just one of the

initiatives that the Aberdeen Area Injury prevention program is undertaking to promote Injury Prevention.

The Area Injury Prevention staff consists of John Weaver, Area Injury Prevention Specialist and Kathey Wilson, Deputy Area Injury Prevention Specialist.

Comments, ideas or potential articles can be brought to Kathey's attention at (605) 867-3147. Unless otherwise noted articles are written and/or prepared by Kathey

INDIAN HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM GRANT

With motor vehicle crashes being our number one killer every reservation should be applying for these grants. The DUI Court grant is especially interesting as sometimes there is a lot of effort put into enforcement but due to staffing issues at the court convictions don't always happen so it is hard for the public to take the enforcement efforts seriously.

DUI Courts Funding -

- **Deadline for Proposals:** There is no firm deadline; however, they are looking to get as many programs funded at the beginning of the FY08

as possible. As a result, it is hopeful that most proposals will be received sometime at the end of October or beginning of November.

- **Maximum Funding:** There is not a specific ceiling limit per award. Because these awards are intended to support salaries and operational costs for part-time and full-time DUI courts, it is expected that awards will likely be in the \$50,000-\$150,000 range.

Other Opportunities

BIA Highway safety has an ongoing program to support police officer overtime and equipment associated with national mobilizations (e.g., "Click-It or Ticket"). Award amounts are expected to be in the \$30,000 - \$50,000 range. There is a simple 1-page application form to be considered for funding.

Funding for Child Safety Seats will also be forthcoming

Contact Ms. Abeyta at 505-563-5371 for additional information.

2008 Injury Prevention Fellowship

The application packet for the 2008 Injury Prevention Fellowship program will be available October 18, 2007 and due December 14th 2007. This particular Fellowship will be the Program Development track.

The I.H.S. Injury Prevention Fellowship is a 12 month program teaching the individual advanced elements necessary to promote injury prevention. Specific courses include program planning, program evaluation, marketing and advocacy and a field course in which one will learn how to conduct focus

groups, keynote interviews and community surveys.

Completion of the Fellowship will require the completion of a project that will have an impact on the community in which the Fellow resides. The Fellowship ends with the project being presented in Washington, DC. at the I.H.S Injury Prevention Symposium.

Admission to this Fellowship requires that the applicant has completed the Injury Prevention I course and have 1 year of experience in injury prevention.

Once accepted the individual can expect to be away from home for 4 weeks and 2 days. They will spend 1 week on location 4 times per year in different locations, plus the 2 days at the Symposium.

This year will mark the 20th anniversary of the Injury Prevention Fellowship program.

For more information contact your Service Unit Sanitarian or the Area IP staff:

John (605) 226-7598

Kathy (605) 867-3147

NEWS

NATIONAL TRIBAL STEERING COMMITTEE FOR INJURY PREVENTION

The National Tribal Steering committee (TSC) for Injury Prevention was established in 1999 by the Indian Health Service. The makeup of the committee consists of 12 members and 12 alternate members representing each of the 12 Indian Health Service Areas. As a National Committee the TSC represents a total of approximately 4.3 million Tribal people from 569 federally recognized Native American and Alaska Native Tribes. The Aberdeen Area representatives are currently Shannon White, Sisseton, and Larry Dauphinais, I.H.S.

Purpose

- To serve as an advocate and liaison with National Partners
- To enhance the Tribes capacity to address and fund IP programs
- To work with Tribes to provide input and obtain information
- To work with I.H.S. Area Specialists during the budget formulation process
- To participate on a regional and national level via conference calls and National TSC meetings

UPCOMING COURSES

Intermediate Injury Prevention—Tucson, AZ
Dec. 4-7th, 2007

AVAILABLE FUNDING

In order to further improve crash data the State of South Dakota has obligated \$200,000.00 available to Tribes to improve data collection of crashes injuries, and fatalities. The funding requests must be submitted on a task grant application and can be accessed at <http://www.state.sd.us/dps/grantinfo.htm> Every reservation is eligible to apply.